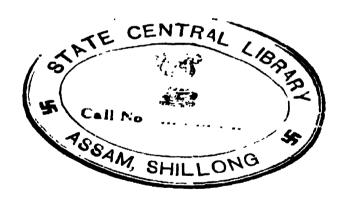
THE WORLD'S BEST PHOTOGRAPHS

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CONTENTS



INTR	ODUCTIO	N.	•	• •	••	••	••	••	••	7
THE	CAMERA	LOO	KS A'	T US			••			9
THE	CAMERA	GOE	S HU	NTINC	;	••	•	••	••	92
THE	CAMERA	AS A	ARTIS	T	• •	••	••	••	• •	120
THE	CAMERA	SHO	ws r	IS PA	CES	••	••	••	••	274
THE	CAMERA	AFLO	OAT .	AND 1	N TH	E SKY	-	••	••	298
THE	CAMERA	AS I	EXPL	ORER	••	••	••	••		322
THE	CAMERA	IN C	COMM	ERCE	AND	INDU	STRY	••	••	346
THE	CAMERA	TEL	ls It	s ow	n sto	ORY		••	••	366



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INTRODUCTION

THE task of compiling a book which claims in its title to present its readers with the best of anything is a task that cannot be undertaken lightly. It does not matter whether the material the book contains is short stories, pictures or photographs; whatever the subject matter, to make such a claim in the title is simply to invite criticism.

In the second place, if such a claim is made at all the editor must perpetually face up to his own preferences. Is his selection of material to be governed by his own likes—that is, to be made from what he honestly considers to be the best—or is the selection of material to be governed by what he believes his readers will like?

If he adopts the former course he will inevitably offend the tastes and susceptibilities of many of his readers. He is fortunate if he does not offend the majority of his readers. If he adopts the latter course he is again backing his personal judgment and has no guarantee that he is right. Moreover he may frequently be prostituting his own conception of what is good to what he thinks other people will like.

Now between what people like and what is good there may be—indeed there frequently is—considerable divergence. Those who doubt this statement have only to remember that musical comedies are far more popular than the plays of Shakespeare; it is, none the less, the considered opinion not only of experts but also of the great mass of humanity that Shakespeare's plays are artistically much more worth while, much better, that is, than at least the great majority of musical comedies.

If, however, the task of compiling The World's Best Photographs was one that few might envy, it was a task that gave its editor and those who helped him a great deal of pleasure. It was undertaken in no cavalier spirit and indeed its preparation was begun as much as two years before the book finally appeared. During that two years some 8,000 photographs representing the work of nearly 700 photographers were collected in the editor's office. There are included in this present volume just over 400 photographs, and a simple calculation will show that of every 20 photographs received by me, I was compelled to reject 19.

I do not claim for a moment that those I have chosen are in every case better than those which I have rejected but my space was limited and

I do claim that those which I have chosen are magnificent photographs. Others would undoubtedly have made a different selection from mine and indeed several volumes could have been compiled without including the same photograph in any two of them.

I would like to express my thanks to all those photographers from all over the world, who have so kindly submitted their work to me (and very many of whom I have disappointed), but they have all shown a sympathetic understanding of the task I had in hand and my grateful thanks are theirs for this understanding even more than for the excellent photographs they were good enough to send me.

A subsidiary difficulty in preparing this book has been the problem of division. I felt that from every point of view it was better to divide this book into sections, though precisely how it was to be divided was extremely difficult. My final choice was quite arbitrary. With every justification I could have included very nearly all the 400 odd pictures appearing in this volume in the section that I have called "The Camera as Artist" for each of them is in my view a distinctive artistic achievement.

I was governed in my task of dividing up the book by considerations of easy reference and although I should be the first to admit that many pictures in different sections could well appear in several other sections without straining in the least the titles which those sections have been given, I do claim that the division adopted does make it easier for the reader to find his way about.

No index has been included in this book. I decided to omit it only after careful thought. Practically all of the titles chosen for the photographs which here appear were selected by me and not by the actual photographers. The titles are, therefore, quite arbitrary and anyone who wishes to refer to a particular picture would find an index useful only if he remembered first of all the name of the photographer who took it and secondly the title which I had ascribed to it. The chances of him remembering both these facts are very small in view of the large number of pictures here collected and an index, in consequence, seemed to me a useless encumbrance. I preferred, therefore, to devote the three or four pages which it would have occupied to more pictures.

In this first section have been collected photographs primarily of human interest. They show us ourselves in all our moods, at work and at play. Here will be found delicate character studies of people of all ages from tiny children to greybeards; intimate "candid camera" shots and "conversation pieces" recording our unguarded moments, graphic action pictures captured anywhere, at the seaside, in stage and studio, in field or factory.

T may be said to-day, with but little exaggeration, that each one of us is a photographer. There are the few who, with full studio equipment, make of photography their livelihood; there are the considerable number who from time to time earn an honest guinea by entering the photographic competitions which nearly every modern newspaper organises periodically; there are, finally, the countless thousands who with such simple cameras as the "Baby Brownie" get enormous enjoyment from taking "snaps" of "Mother and Dad" on holiday at the seaside and sometimes inflict considerable boredom by showing their albums to their friends when the holidays are over.

No longer now is it as fashionable as in former days to make attempts at singing, playing the piano, or painting in water-colours; instead, those creative energies that formerly went to satisfy them are now turned very largely to photography. And in America and France, and more recently in the rest of Europe, papers have been launched which sell on their photographs alone. Indeed, the rise of such papers is one of the romances of modern journalism. The public clamour for them, and ask for more, with an appetite that is apparently insatiable. We see the public taking photography to its bosom, becoming "camera conscious" in a big way, and giving every indication of becoming more so.

In Britain the "photo-journal" has progressed by leaps and bounds until it is almost abreast of its American rivals. Other countries have profited by the experience of the earlier ventures, and to-day all over the world new photographic journals are springing up. The East has made its own ventures. In India, in particular, are photographic journals which in modernity and style hold their own with anything in the world.

Of all the many branches of photography, it is safe to say that the

type of picture that gave to camera-work its first great impetus is the one that shows us what we ourselves look like, for it panders, to an extent undreamed of before the day of the camera, to two of the most powerful emotions that human beings feel—those of curiosity and vanity. Before the dawn of photography this desire to see what we look like called forth the intimate, domestic type of picture which reached its full flower in Dutch art in the sixteenth century, and in the more stylised family groups, the "Conversation Pieces" of Gainsborough and the other great artists of the eighteenth-century English school.

The coming of the camera, however, has to a large extent shifted the demand for the "human interest" picture from the artist (used in this sense to denote a man who draws or paints) to the photographer. It is often said that "the camera cannot lie," and though in point of fact the camera can, on occasions, be made to tell the grossest lies, the photographer is, generally speaking, tied down, on account of the scientific nature of his medium, to what is actually in front of his camera.

One photograph is to the ordinary man or woman worth a page of description and can be made to carry more conviction than all the arguments of a modern Socrates. It is unthinkable that there should be produced as evidence in a court of law a painting by, say, Augustus John, of the room where the murder was committed; yet it is a fact that a large part of a cameraman's business in the Harlem district of New York, for example, is concerned with taking such things as "the bedroom ceiling that fell down," and "the black eye received in the fight," so that the results can be produced as irrefutable evidence in court.

It is only in very recent years, however, that the art of the candid or unposed type of photograph has really developed. Before this, photographers were hampered by their materials, by the lack of speed in plates and lenses, from getting anything but obviously posed pictures, those wooden groups, faces set in glassy stares, that gaze bleakly at us from the pages of so many family albums. Compare a representative photograph from such an album with the "Portrait Unaware" on page 27. The subtle and telling humour in the composition of the latter is of very recent development in photography.

During the nineteenth century, people became camera-conscious in the worst possible way, and this type of camera-consciousness has persisted, so that even to-day the mere sight of a camera is sufficient to produce in the demeanour and expression of many people a change as devastating as it is unnatural. They are being photographed, therefore



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they must pose and be self-conscious till the ordeal is over, when they can again revert to their normal selves. The results—and they are to be seen on practically every passport in the world—give about as adequate a rendering of the subject as would a picture of a brick wall.

As a result of this camera-consciousness the art of studio portrait photography has become as much a matter of psychology as of camera technique; the most essential part of the photographer's equipment is an ability to woo his subjects into a state of unselfconsciousness. How skilful the modern photographer has become in this psychological task may be seen in the child studies, formal as they are, on pages 38 and 39.

It is this necessity for unselfconsciousness in photographic subjects that has given rise to the "candid camera" in recent years. Instead of bringing his subjects into the studio, the modern photographer now goes out and catches them unawares. He works with a camera (almost as small as a watch and as precise in its mechanism) which he can carry about with him wherever he goes so that it is always at hand to catch and preserve the fleeting moment that makes a picture. He uses high-speed film that will not only catch the quick smile on a face, but will stop the bird on the wing, a train rushing by, the dancer as she leaps into the air.

By capturing these and similar moments for us he is performing one of the most useful functions of a true artist; that function has been defined as the power to "enlarge the borders of consciousness." He does it by showing us beauty and significance where we never suspected that such qualities existed.

A quick glance through the photographs in this section will reveal how well the camera can perform this service for us. It provides us not only with what has been happily termed a "frozen memory," but also with a glimpse of things which our own eyes cannot perceive. Take for example the picture on page 28. There, a brawny Highlander is swinging a mighty hammer preparatory to making his throw. If we watched such an event we should see only a swirl of movement. Nothing would stand out—none of the rhythm, the poise, the sense of effort. But the camera, in a split-second click of its shutter, has captured a vivid moment by stilling that tumble of arms and kilts. The thrower's supreme effort is frozen into immobility and at our leisure we can observe all the grace and energy in his pose.

It is worth noting also how the photographer exploits his camera to concentrate our attention on what is important. He eliminates his backgrounds, which otherwise might distract us from the foreground figure,





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by throwing them out of focus. They become merely a soft blur which frames but does not compete with the main interest of the scene. Notice the result on page 28.

The advent of the candid camera put into the hands of the best photographers a means of realising more nearly the aims which they had been striving for since they began to take their profession really seriously. It enabled them, that is to say, to go out and record aspects of life around them that they could not attempt before. It enabled them at last to perform that task which has been defined by one of the greatest of living camera artists to be the first and foremost duty of a photographer, the task, namely, of catching the eye and holding it. It brought life into photography and with it the insatiable interest of the world. It worked an artistic revolution that is comparable with any other in history.

Generally speaking, therefore, the candid camera has given photography the impetus to develop along one of its most significant courses, the depicting of incidents and character in life around us. It has done this with such striking success that it has gone a very long way to release the strangle-hold which the would-be "artistic" photograph (an abomination that was no more than a pale and lifeless imitation of paintings) was getting upon photography as a whole. The first essential of a good candid photograph is that it must be alive; composition, even technical competence are very secondary considerations, and are valueless if the first essential is absent.

From this it must not be deduced, as some people seem in danger of doing, that a good action picture must necessarily be of someone leaping into the air and grinning with delight. Excellent pictures of this type certainly are taken and can be seen in the following pages, but just as good or even better are those quieter studies, such as the one on page 75 of the old woman plodding along beside her donkey-cart. She is barely more than a silhouette against the road ahead, but the photograph has caught her just at the moment when her whole action and surroundings seem calculated to emphasise and force home to us the circumstances of her life and the tragedy that lies behind it. This is as true an action picture as any other in the book.

It is as well to correct another popular impression about action shots. The modern developments of high-speed lenses and films have enabled the camera to still the most impetuous movement. We have already noted one case (see page 28). In a later section (see "The Camera As Scientist") are many other action pictures that can truly be described

as miraculous. But where studies of human interest are concerned such technical possibilities are often abused. The blurring which frequently results whenever photographs are taken of fast-moving objects is often an artistic aid. Action stilled to clear-cut immobility appears, in many cases, quite unreal, and the skilful photographer will remember this. Look at the picture "Where's That Ball?" on page 36. Neither the figure of the woman nor the figure of the dog is what photographers call sharp; their outlines are very slightly fuzzy. The effect is excellent, for it carries a suggestion of excited movement that would be lost were each figure clear-cut, sharply defined and utterly rigid. Part of the art of the photographer lies in knowing just how much sharpness to sacrifice to art.

The candid camera has, perhaps, secured its greatest triumph with stage photography—though its fullest possibilities have not yet been realised in that field. The forces of prejudice have been more difficult to overcome. The struggle here is between "stills" of scenes from the play, for which the actors pose on the stage—or sometimes by flashlight during a dress rehearsal—and shots taken with a miniature camera during an actual performance by ordinary stage lighting.

Studio studies of actors in character have been with us almost ever since the camera ceased to be a scientific marvel and became a commercial instrument. But modern camera art has worked a great revolution in the studio study. Those artificial, histrionic gestures, those wooden poses are things of yesterday. To-day the dramatic reveals itself in stark realism. The study of John Mills in the play Of Mice and Men (see page 17) has all the drama which one could desire. Here there is no actor in a play but a figure in reality.

It is interesting to compare such a study with an actual stage picture. Stage pictures are taken under the most exacting conditions and the photographer is compelled to work with the fastest possible film and the fastest possible lens. Miniature cameras are essential for this work, for no other camera combines such speed of lens with portability.

Unfortunately high-speed films do not lend themselves easily to enlargement free of graininess and blur; unfortunately, also, miniature camera negatives demand very great enlargement indeed if they are to compare with studio work. Even so, what the photographer can do is very impressive and it must be remembered that since his subjects are unconscious of his labour, his pictures have an unposed naturalness that studio studies often lack.

Magnificent examples of actual stage photography are to be seen on

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pages 67 and 87. These studies of the ballet, action shots of surpassing grace and rhythm, yield nothing in beauty and design to those which the studio can give us.

The candid camera is not to-day concerned solely with individuals or single subjects; some of its greatest successes have been concerned with groups of people acting in crowds. It can and does catch and hold the fleeting moment in this connexion just as successfully as it can and does with the individual object. The remarkable back-view study of a seaside crowd on page 54, with its graceful suggestion of a formal painting, is a fine example of how the candid camera can capture beauty as well as record history. Mainly because of this development, it can safely be said that the work of the candid cameraman is going to be of the greatest possible historical importance. We have contemporary prints and portraits galore of the scenes and characters in the French Revolution, but what would we not give for a few photographs of that event and of the people who lived through it?

It can further be said that, in all probability, candid photographs will have a greater future than studio portraits. There are comparatively few people who to-day are interested in a photograph, however well taken, of you or me, unless we happen to be a Prime Minister. a Congress Leader, a "public enemy" or someone equally famous; there will be fewer still who will want to look at us 100 years from now. But a photograph of a crowd—perhaps containing you and me—cheering or taking part in a procession, or of a tragic incident such as an earthquake in Quetta, will be of enormous interest to millions of people and will, in the future, assume historical importance. Many of the photographs in the pictorial magazine of to-day have a world-wide value which will endure.

The relation between the candid camera and the age we live in is obvious to see. No longer can we sit at our ease dismissing such things as the slum problem with a few exclamations of polite horror and a transient feeling that "somebody ought to do something." Photographs now bring these things starkly to our notice with a vividness that refuses to be passed by. The picture of a slum on page 58 is evidence of this.

Such photographs are social documents which it is impossible not to read. They make us aware of the world around us and what is right and wrong with it, whether we like it or not. If it has done nothing else, the camera has made the pleading of ignorance—the ostrich-like burying of our heads in the sands of illusion—a very thin excuse..

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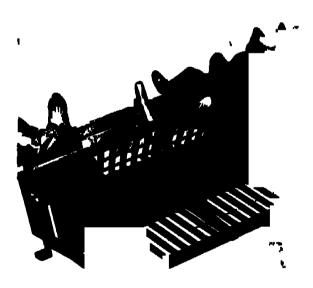








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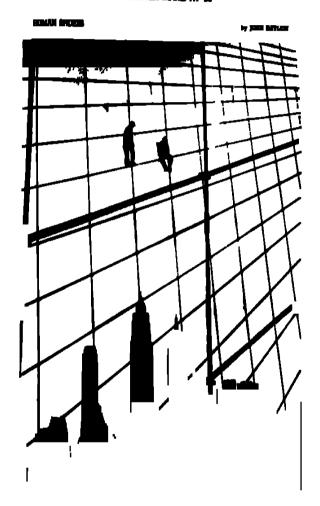


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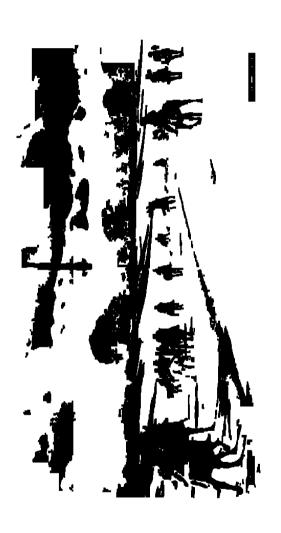


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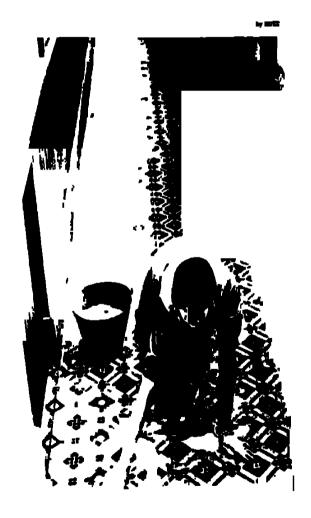
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THE CAMERA GOES HUNTING

In this section will be found a representative number of photographs of animals, birds, insects and fish. They range over all types of subject from the domestic cat to the wild zebra in its native haunts. Preference has been given to photographs of artistic worth, rather than to those of news or story interest only.

ANY psychologists maintain that the instinct to hunt is one of the most fundamental and powerful of all our instincts. Perhaps that is why those people who can afford it, whether they live in the East or the West, will spend large sums of money in organising elaborate expeditions to hunt animals of all sizes between elephants and foxes.

As the result of these expeditions, expeditions frequently involving much danger and hardship, the walls and floors of many of our larger houses bear upon them the skins and heads of countless animals. We cannot doubt that the killing of these animals delighted the hunters, but many of us doubt whether their stuffed bodies delight the beholders.

For this reason, if for no other, the advent of the camera is to be welcomed. It has presented the hunter with a new sport, a sport not of killing, but of recording. Those who value the dangers and hardships of the hunting expedition above anything else, lose nothing, for the modern cameraman, endeavouring to secure a photograph of a tigress nursing her cubs, is, if anything, in greater danger than the modern huntsman who, from his safe perch in a tree, waits to shoot the tiger about to take the kid helplessly tethered at the bottom.

So far as results of the two methods of hunting are concerned, there can be little doubt which the world at large prefers. A tiger shot by a gun becomes a glassy-eyed monstrosity of interest only to the proud hunter and his immediate family. A tiger shot by the camera becomes a thing of universal interest, for its pictures delight and instruct all.

We can learn nothing of interest from the head of a dead animal except what the head of a dead animal looks like; but a photograph of zebras collected at a water-hole in their native surroundings (such as the photograph shown on pages 104-105) tells us a great deal about the zebra, besides providing us with a beautiful picture.

Take also the superb study of giraffe heads on page 102, superb

because of the graceful curves of their long necks set off so effectively against the high branches of the trees and the background of the sky. Here is a photograph that brings home to us, as no dead giraffe ever could, how beautiful these animals may be.

This is but one, and by no means the most important, of the various aspects of animal photography. The camera can hunt not only after the elephant, but also after the spider in its web. Very many of its most successful efforts are achieved, for example, with domestic animals.

Because we have seen horse, cow, sheep, cat and dog in dull photographs without number, we need not suppose that such animals do not lend themselves to delightful pictures. A glance through this section of the book should be conclusive. Two examples alone need be mentioned: that of the head of a pony on page 112, and of a young cow on page 111.

Dogs, compared with other animals, do not, as a rule, photograph well. They are far too anxious to please, and as a result become almost as camera-conscious as human beings. They pose resolutely in front of the camera like well-meaning children, or what is worse, take such an intense interest in what is going on that it is impossible to detach their attention for a moment. Unless one can detach their attention there is no chance of securing a good picture. Dogs must therefore be taken when they are off their guard, like the charming study of a borzoi and her puppies on page 110, or, better still, in action, with a camera working at high speeds, to catch the full beauty of their movements, like the greyhound seen on page 110.

The proper photographing of cats has been much hampered by those who have tried to over-sentimentalise them. As a lyric writer has wittily observed of these photographers:

"Their idea of Art
Is a very young cat
Looking out of a very old boot."

Their efforts were abortive and are now very rightly forgotten. As an example of a good cat photograph of the modern type, take the picture of the kitten on page 107, which with the enquiring look on its face is as charming as any subject can be, but it is in no way sentimentalised.

Birds, fish and insects, lacking the endearing human qualities of other animals, lose much of their value to the photographer, although there are brilliant exceptions such as the photograph, included in this section, of a cockatoo looking quizzically down at us from its perch on page 113, or the proud swan with her family of cygnets on page 100.

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THE CAMERA COES HENTING



Generally, however, photographs of these subjects rely for their appeal entirely upon the beauty of action that they display. High-speed lenses and films have enabled us to catch the seagull on the wing—as for example, on page 96—and thus fully to appreciate for the first time its almost miraculous grace of movement. It is by giving us pictures of this sort that the camera can score, for with no other medium would such accuracy of recording be possible.

Fish are even more difficult to catch with the camera than with a rod and line, and although many photographs have been taken under water, they are not generally satisfactory except as scientific curiosities. The only way to photograph this type of subject is through the walls of an aquarium where the opportunities are necessarily limited; the results are, again, valuable as scientific records, but not often as pictures.

Here also, however, there are brilliant exceptions, as when the photographer is able to catch the wonderful texture of a fish's scales or the liquid movement of its fins as it glides among the weeds. An example is seen in the study on page 108.

Insect photographs, too, are more often than not of scientific rather than artistic interest. With all the goodwill in the world, most people cannot summon up much enthusiasm for photographs of black beetles and wood-lice and are tempted to dismiss the whole subject out of hand without considering the wonderful photographic possibilities of the butterfly. On page 115 there is an amazing series of photographs showing the various stages of a butterfly's emergence from its chrysalis. These photographs are excellent examples of the sort of photograph which, besides being of interest to the scientist, have sufficient pictorial interest to be appreciated by everyone.

Practically all animal photography is the product of comparatively recent years. In this branch more than in any other branch of photography it is necessary, because of the nature of the subjects, to be able to take photographs at high speeds and such photographs have only been made possible by the more modern types of cameras and films. Before the advent of these cameras and films, animals could, of course, be taken in repose and some excellent work of this kind was done, but, collectively, it was not fully comprehensive and lacked the amazing variety that photographers are able to produce to-day. We now possess "candid camera" pictures of animals to match those we already have of ourselves. The results, as the following pages show, are some of the most charming and interesting that the camera has ever achieved.

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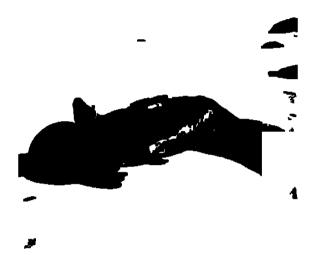


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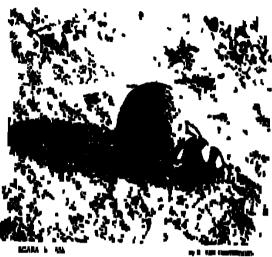
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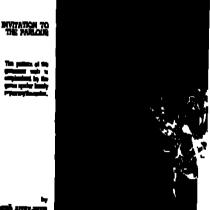
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In this section are to be found photographs first and foremost of artistic interest. They range from formal portraiture to flower studies and photos of architectural subjects. Still life shots and those pattern photographs, so distinctively modern in conception, are also features of this section. In the latter class the camera, perhaps, excels itself as in no other branch of photography. Nudes, landscape work, night studies, photos of snow, fog, cloud, mist and rain will also be found in this section.

HE artistic possibilities of photography have been the subject of much argument. Not only have photographers fought against the prejudice of those who have strenuously denied that the camera had any artistic possibilities, but they have also quarrelled even more violently among themselves as to what the camera should do if it is to be taken seriously as an artist.

It is an extraordinary story that is wrapped up with the entire history of photography.

The first photographers were artists in the usual sense of the word, that is to say they were painters. One of the best of them, a Scotsman called David Octavius Hill, working in Edinburgh, photographed his subjects primarily to guide him in the painting of their portraits. He was an inferior artist, but a magnificent photographer, with the rather ironic result that to-day his name lives entirely through the photographs which he took to help him to paint pictures that are now completely forgotten.

While it was still an artist's hobby the camera flourished and produced some excellent pictures which gave promise of a brilliant and unclouded future, but before long people began to wake up to the fact that it also had immense commercial potentialities. Thus, in the middle of the last century, the professional photographer came into being.

From the first, photography as a business was very careful to preserve its artistic associations. Photographers worked in "studios," they wore the back velvet coats and knotted cravats of the traditional artist, their backgrounds were the heavy draperies found in the portraits of the

period. The result was, of course, that all serious artists came to regard photography as a debased form of art unworthy of consideration, and in consequence, no reputable artist would have anything to do with it.

Despite this sentence of artistic outlawry photography as a business prospered exceedingly. Not content with mere draperies as backgrounds photographers started using painted scenes to suit the temperament of the sitter. You could be photographed in a realistic-looking woodland glade, or sitting on a stile in the middle of a painted field, or even (and this was particularly popular) on the sea shore with mountainous waves breaking a few inches behind you. True, the head of the unfortunate sitter had to be clamped in a sort of vice in order to keep him still during the long exposures necessary (with the result that he nearly always appeared with a strained, hunted expression) yet the results pleased everyone concerned enormously and the demands to have "likenesses" taken steadily increased.

The discovery of the dry plate process towards the end of the century simplified outdoor photography enormously. Nevertheless in this, as in all other branches, photographers were continually hampered by the tradition that the ultimate aim of all their efforts was to produce photographs looking as near as possible like drawings and paintings—and if their results did not approach that ideal they were not considered "artistic."

During this period, which lasted into the "twenties" of the present century, some good work was certainly produced, notably that of the late Herbert G. Ponting, some of whose photographs, notably those taken on Captain Scott's Antarctic expedition in 1911-12, have, in their line. never been bettered. Two of these are seen on pages 143 and 212, but work of this kind was an infinitesimal proportion of the general output. Generally speaking, the standard of work, though technically excellent, was from the artistic point of view deplorable. The harder photographers worked for artistic effects, the more their object was defeated.

It was not, in fact, really until after the war that the modern movement in photography began to show itself. It began, in America, with a small group of men, artists in the true sense of the word, who realised that photography as a medium of expression should not be bound down by the traditions and conventions that applied to drawing and painting, that it must free itself from these and develop along its own lines. They experimented with the camera, taking everything regardless of whether it was generally regarded as "beautiful" or "picturesque," often from

extraordinary angles and with unusual lighting effects, and with results that breathed new life into photography which before had looked as though it were doomed, through a surfeit of bad art, to a dreary death among the dust and draperies of the old-fashioned photographer's studio.

It is, perhaps, not out of place to examine here the grounds for regarding photography as something essentially different from drawing and painting.

It is undoubtedly true that the camera can be made to lie, but generally speaking all photographs must have had for their subject something that actually existed. It is this fact that gives photographs that urgency and feeling of actuality that is their chief appeal. They represent reality caught in a fraction of a second of time and set down accurately before us to instruct, amuse, horrify, or what you will; whether it be a picture of a famous politician or of a crankshaft, we know that each actually existed, at the time the photograph was taken, as we see them before us.

In this fact is to be found the essential difference between a photograph and a drawing. Whereas the latter must always be a very personal record of the impression the subject has made in the artist's mind, the accuracy or inaccuracy of which does not, from the artistic point of view, really matter, a photograph once it ceases to be accurate loses its value.

People may say, however: "Granted that a photograph is a completely different thing from a drawing, by what standards, then, can it be judged? If we are not to criticise photography from the same standpoint as the other graphic arts how are we to tell a good photograph from a bad one?"

To answer this it is necessary to have a clear idea of what you mean by a "good" photograph, a much more difficult thing to decide than what you mean by a "good" drawing. How can we say, for instance, whether a technically perfect photograph of the Taj Mahal is better than an equally technically perfect photograph of a jelly-fish in an aquarium? The answer does not really depend on whether you prefer architecture to jelly-fish, but on what the photographer has done with his subject in each case. Actually the chances are that the latter will win the prize. The beauties of architecture are familiar to most of us; hence, unless the photographer can throw some new light on this rather hackneyed subject his work will be merely commonplace. On the other hand the man who

can produce an interesting, significant study of a jelly-fish has, in this hypothetical case, enlarged the borders of our appreciation by showing us beauty and significance in a subject in which we do not usually expect to find these qualities.

It is for this reason that pictures of such things as beautiful buildings, pretty girls, etc., have not found their way into this book unless they have some quality about them that gives them some interest beyond that of being mere representations of their subject. It may be that the ones included in this section have been taken from some unusual angle, like those on pages 123 and 140, both of which bring out so strikingly the essential grandeur of their subjects or that they show particularly beautiful lighting effects like the nudes on pages 153 and 172 or that they have caught some glorious natural effect like the waving corn against the cloud-fleckéd sky on page 148.

Perhaps even more interesting, however, as photographs are the studies of things which are apt to be overlooked by most people, such as the closesup of the line of foam on the sea shore which appears on page 181 or the pittern made by the shadows in the picture on page 244.

Portraiture characteristics, and in this line the artistic possibilities of the amera come increasingly to the fore. To take a good portrait the present the personality as well as the features of latter so that by lighting, pose and surroundings he can emphasise the personality as a success it will tell you make the subject than pages of description.

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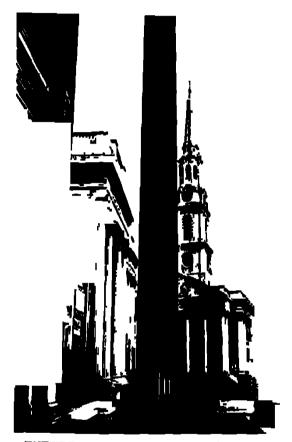
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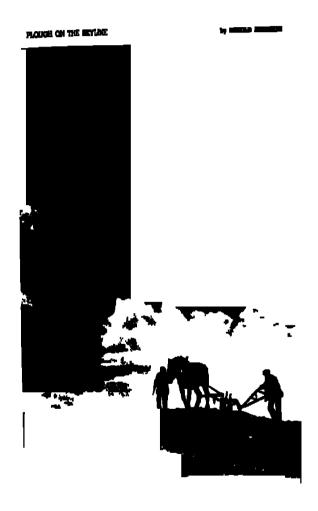


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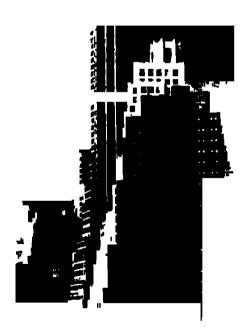
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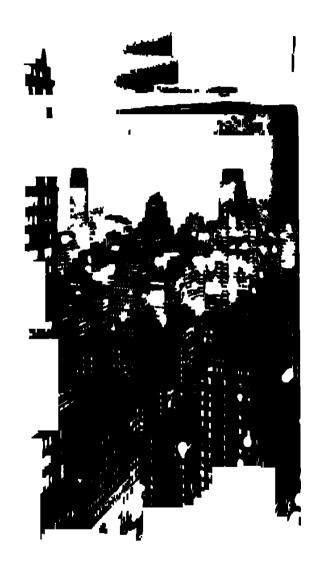


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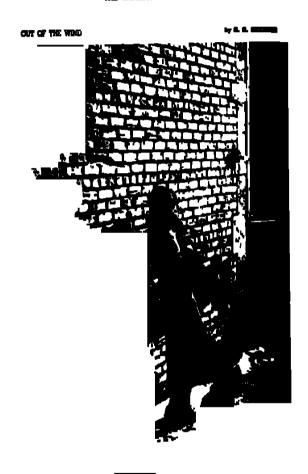
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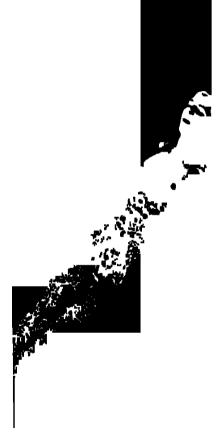


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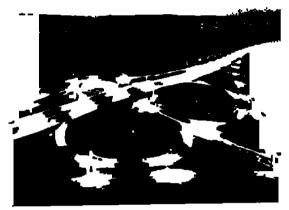


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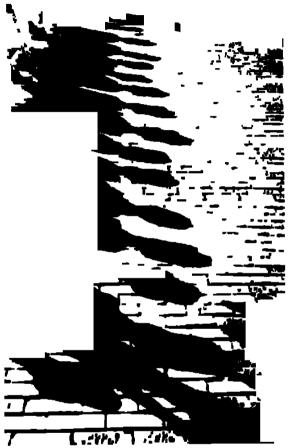




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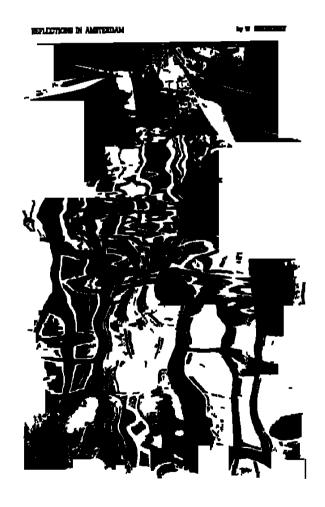




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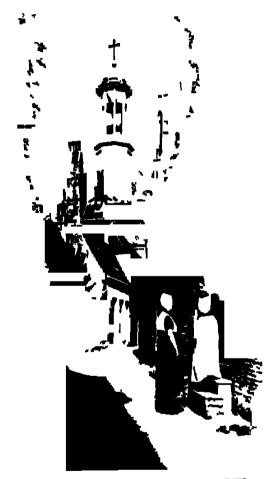
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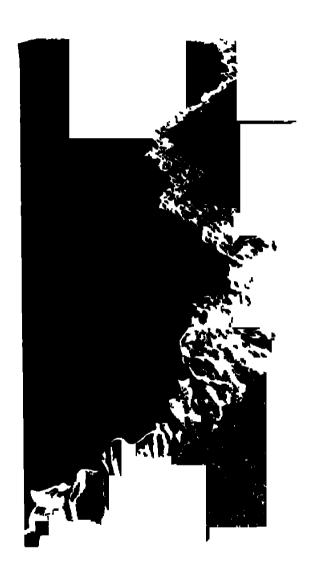
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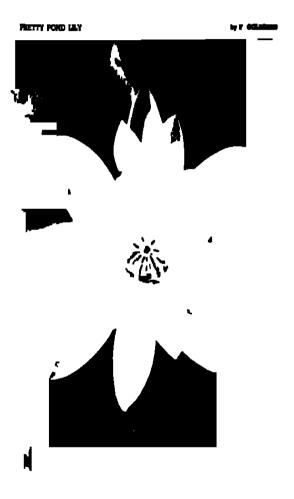


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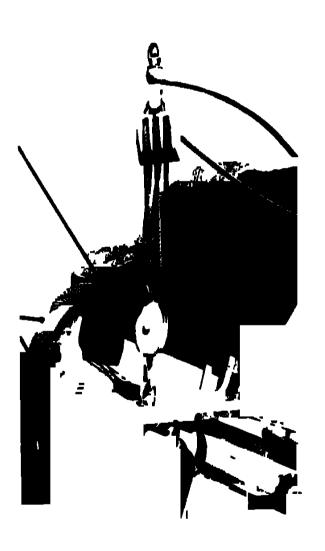
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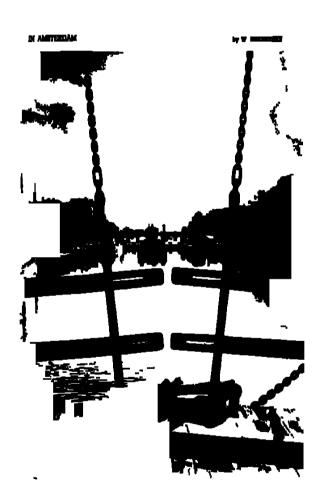


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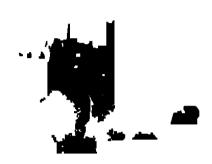
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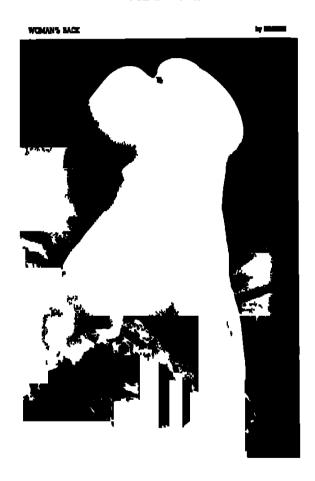




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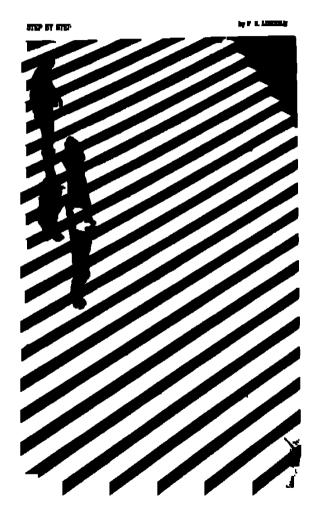


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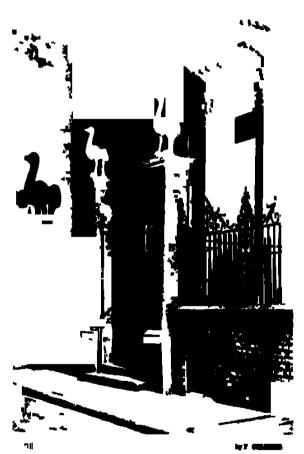




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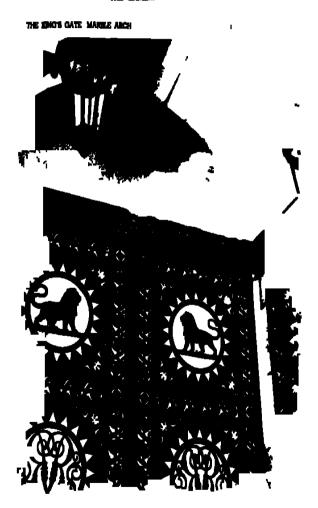






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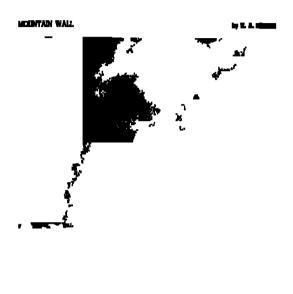






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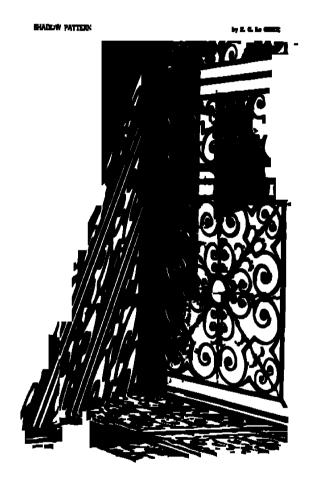
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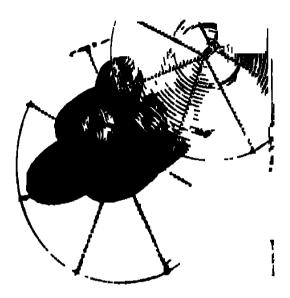


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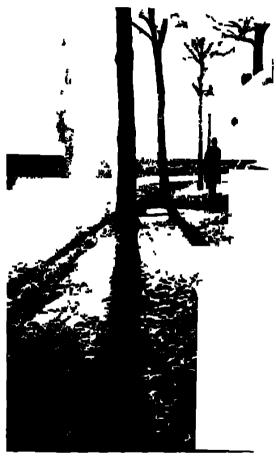




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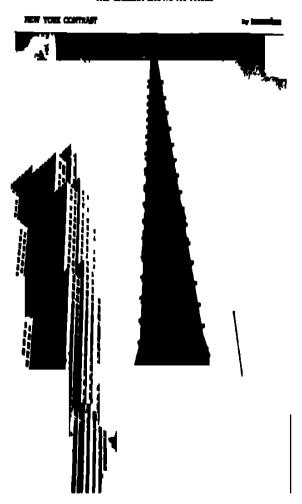
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Another interesting trick that is only as old as photography itself, but that is extensively used to-day, is the process known as photomontage. This is the making of a composite photograph from several different negatives or mixing photographs and drawings. In its debased form this method is used deliberately to deceive, as is done continually in commercial studios where figures taken indoors by artificial lighting are attached to backgrounds showing some outdoor scene, usually with extremely unconvincing results. However, when the mixing is done artistically with no attempt at crude deception, striking compositions result.

Take, for instance, the picture on page 283, which by this montage method very plainly tells its story, or the unusual picture on page 278, a beautiful and arresting design which by the combination of various, apparently incongruous, subjects conveys an extraordinary feeling of space and vastness in a subtle manner worthy of the best artistic traditions.

Special processes are also represented here, such as infra-red photography, by which the camera is able to outdo the human eye in being able to see vast distances in spite of fog or mist, as in the examples on page 295, showing Mount Everest seen from a hundred miles away, and the whole of the Isle of Wight from the air.

So long, it seems, as photographers continue playing tricks with the camera, so long will they continue to obtain valuable results. Some of the tricks may, it is true, be valueless, and others merely irritating. Yet it is broadly true to say that each fresh trick marks a fresh advance in the camera's potentialities. The pictures in this section demonstrate forcibly that photography, whatever else it is, is not a static art. Constantly it is developing. The possibilities of infra-red photography, for instance, or of combining drawing with photography, are only just beginning to be realized. The potentialities of the former are fascinating. To be able to see—even if it is only at second-hand, over a distance of 100 miles or more, is a thing that only a few years ago would have been thought beyond the bounds of credulity or possibility. And in the latter field there is surely a chance for an original and creative mind to develop what would appear to be one of the most interesting branches of photography. So far only the fringes of the subject have really been touched.

In this, as in other experimental branches of photography, we may look forward to some surprising developments in the future—which fact alone would make photography a most enthralling subject for study.



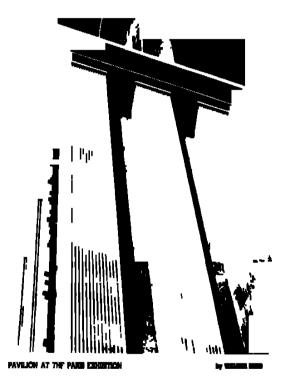




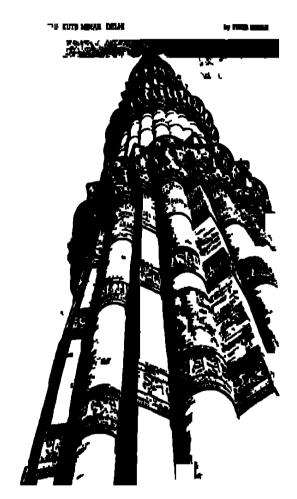


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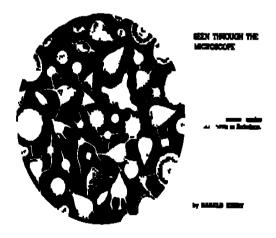
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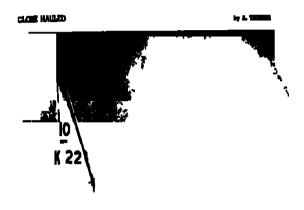
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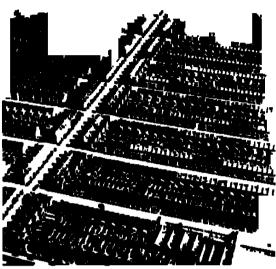


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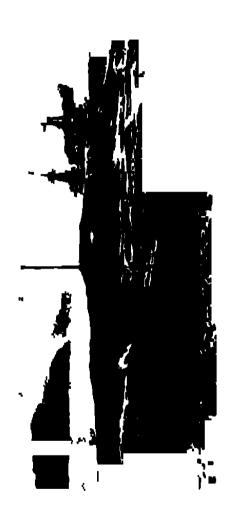
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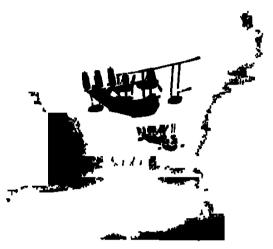
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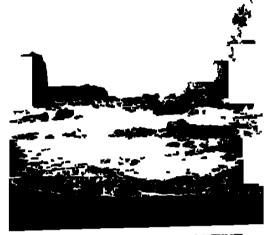




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THE CAMERA AS EXPLORER

by J. O. POPTER

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THE CAMERA AS EXPLORER

In this section are scenes from many lands in the old world and the new. Buildings and ruins, snowy wastes of the antarctic, islands of the south seas, peasant and other types, all these pictures combine to give us some idea of the infinite variety of the world we live in

Por centuries men have been satisfying their desire to roam far and wide from their native land in search of new discoveries, for centuries they have been bringing home wondrous tales of what they have seen. Of late years the camera has come to their assistance, enabling explorers to substantiate the truth of what they state. It has in fact become one of the most essential items in the explorer's equipment, enabling him to record his discoveries by a method of guaranteed accuracy and to bring back a permanent witness of his work.

One of the first expeditions to make use of the camera extensively was that lead by Captain Scott to the South Pole in 1911. The photographer on this occasion was Herbert G. Ponting, whose work, although it was done so many years ago, has never in its own field been surpassed. Some of his superb studies of the Antarctic are included in the following pages (see pages 332 and 336) and also in a previous section "The Camera Goes Hunting" where some of his extraordinary pictures of penguins taken on the same expedition will be found.

The camera has, in this sphere of exploration, done a great service to those many of us who have no opportunity for travel. It has enabled us actually to see what the peoples of far-off lands, of whom previously we had only heard, look like. Typical figures from several lands are included in the pages of this section. The picturesque strangeness, each in their different ways, of the Breton girl on page 330, the Tunisian shepherd on page 331, or, to those people who live in Europe, of the old Indian woman showing her bangles, appearing on page 325, is something that before the advent of the camera we could never have enjoyed. The camera in fact is fulfilling a double purpose; it gives actual proof of the existence of far-off things, thus turning exploration into an exact science, and it gives to the ordinary man and woman a far wider knowledge of the peoples and places of lands other than their own.

THE CAMERA AS EXPLOSES

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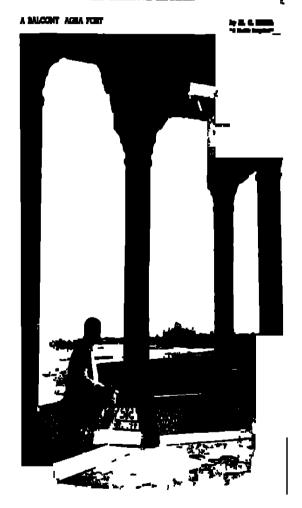
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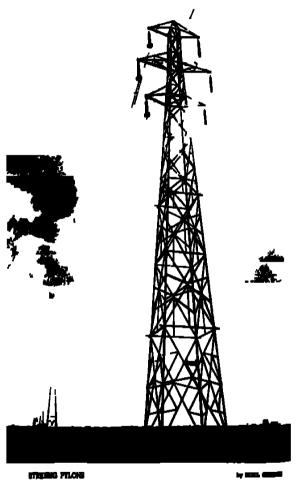
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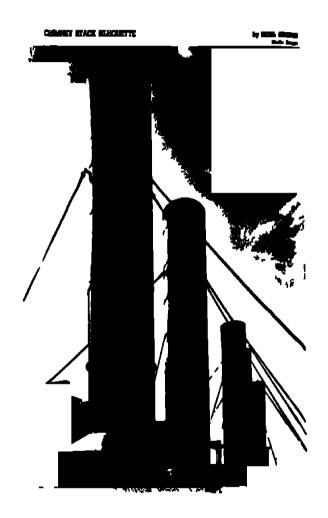




THE CAMERA IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

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THE CAMERA IN CONCERCE AND INDUSTRY





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THE CAMERA TELLS ITS OWN STORY

In this final section one hundred years of photography are explored. Here are collected some of the photographs that record the development of the camera. They include some of the very earliest photographs ever taken. An interesting feature is the historic news pictures that begin with the Crimean War and end with the Coronation of King George VI. As before, pictorial greatness has been preferred to mere historic significance or story.

HE year 1839 marked the birth of photography and in the year 1939 exhibitions were held all over the world to celebrate the centenary of this new medium of recording which, from its beginnings as a primitively scientific form of entertainment has to-day become one of the great industries of the world. This evolution of photography in a short hundred years is sufficiently remarkable in itself: but it reflects moreover, the astonishing influence which it has had upon the world, an influence indeed comparable with that exercised by the invention of wireless.

In the short and final section of this book which follows, an a tempt has been made to collect some of the outstanding photographs which have been taken since the birth of this new art—for an art it has now become as well as an industry. Almost entirely, this attempt has been directed by a desire to present photographs that are in every way worthy of contemplation in themselves, photographs which in their day certainly ranked as great masterpieces. The technical limitations of the early apparatus are frankly impossible to understand to-day, so easy and so automatic has become the modern business of taking, developing and printing a picture. It might be supposed, therefore, that these limitations would have crippled the art of the earliest photographers and made a comparison between their work and the work of their modern successors quite odious.

Actually this supposition, reasonable as it may be, is quite wrong. A glance through the next few pages should prove it. Despite all the difficulties against which the early experimenters contended, despite the complete novelty of the medium in which they were working, a

considerable number managed to produce photographs that, pictorially, can rank with any in this book. Take for example the photograph by D. Octavius Hill on page 366. It dates from the year 1843 and its technical limitations are obvious. Yet in feeling and in composition, in the handling and grouping of his subjects, Hill has shown himself to be a photographic artist of the first rank.

It was inevitable that until the comparatively recent development of fast lenses and films, photography should be limited more or less to formal portraiture. Certainly it was in this branch that it most excelled, but some astonishing work was done in other directions. Perhaps the most remarkable, as certainly the most fascinating achievements which it reached in other directions, were the news pictures that record for us scenes from earlier days. In this section a number of these early news photographs are to be found and amongst the earliest are those of the Crimean and American Civil Wars, photographs associated with the names of Roger Fenton and Matthew B. Brady respectively.

A fitting sense of the dramatic is to be seen in all these early photographs and although technical limitations forbade these early workers from attempting the same subjects as those so successfully recorded during the last Great War, the same vital appeal is evident in all. Indeed a very interesting comparison is offered between, for example, the photographs of an 1865 battery on page 374 and of a 1916 howitzer battery on page 381.

These historic news pictures have been carried, in this section, up to the Coronation of King George VI in Westminster Abbey (page 384). This was the first occasion on which the coronation of a sovereign had ever been photographed. Before that date the world had had to rely on artists' impressions of the scene and good as some of these impressions have been they cannot compare, in their intimate reality, with the work of a photographer.

The camera has indeed brought us a new sense. By its aid we can now see into the past. All previous history before 1839 has relied upon hear-say, the written word, and the fleeting impressions of contemporary artists. That state of affairs is past. To-day we can study the intimate everyday life of the late Victorian age in the same detail as we can study the contemporary world. Yet that age is as much part of history as the age of Shah Jehan. And in the future our remote descendants will be able to recall us in all our comings and goings with the same ease as we ourselves now recall our last year's holiday.

THE CAMERA TELLS ITS OWN STORY



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by MATTERY P. IDAUT





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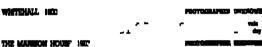
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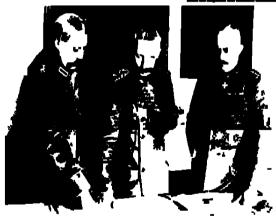
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